



OCEAN LITERACY BRIEF #4:

Giving more attention to inclusivity¹

Selected recommendations

1. Experience yourself in inclusivity in practice to better understand what ensuring none is left behind really means
2. Strengthen the attention given to inclusivity in OL initiatives, strategies and projects at all scales, identifying conditions for good practice and mainstreaming
3. Bring inclusivity to the forefront of (the vision, activities and membership of) the EU4Ocean coalition
4. Adapt knowledge sharing and communication to facilitate access to more diverse communities, while bringing these communities explicitly on board of inspiring forward-looking ocean narratives

FROM GOOD INTENTION TO REALITY

While inclusivity is widely recognized as key to the societal relevance of Ocean Literacy (OL) initiatives and projects, it has received limited (operational) attention among members of, and contributors to, the EU4Ocean coalition. The recent adoptions of the European Ocean Pact² and of the EU Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2030³ provides an excellent opportunity and political momentum for addressing inclusivity in relation to the delivery of a healthy, productive and sustainable ocean in general, and the strengthening of ocean literacy in particular – an area where the EU4Ocean coalition can play a proactive supporting role!

Addressing inclusivity in relation to ocean literacy can be translated *inter alia* into:

- **Broadening participation** in the EU4Ocean coalition's communities: (a) widening the diversity of platform members with actors from less-represented maritime sectors and from inland and outermost communities; (b) bringing on board actors from the social sphere committed to inclusivity and with interest in the ocean; (c) mobilising youth and young professionals from maritime sectors, non-academic spheres and vulnerable communities in the Youth4Ocean Forum⁴; (d) bringing

more vocational schools, schools from underserved areas as well as education institutions dedicated to vulnerable groups to the Network of European Blue Schools;

- **Facilitating access** to (ocean) knowledge as well as to OL initiatives and activities: (a) facilitating the **sharing** of inclusivity experiences and practice among coalition members; (b) providing support to **(collective) OL projects** involving representatives of vulnerable groups as co-developers and target groups; (c) setting a (virtual) space in the coalition's **resource corner** dedicated to resources and experiences with a strong inclusivity component; (d) **adapting communication** and adopting inclusive practices such as Easy-To-Read (ETR) language for public-facing content, or Augmented and Alternative Communication (AAC) for vulnerable audiences attending e.g. events and exhibitions; (e) ensuring a **facilitated access to events** (workshops and conferences, art exhibitions, outdoor activities...) for everyone, including people with impairments.

1 Authors: **Pierre Strosser**, ACTeon & EU4Ocean secretariat (p.strosser@acteon-environment.eu), **Christelle Alin**, Villa Arson (christelle.alin@villa-arson.org), **Valeria Bottalico**, Ocean Space & TBA21 (valeria@ocean-space.org), **Marie Philippon**, independant expert (mariepn61@gmail.com), **Stéphane Pocardalo**, Labo des Histoires (stephane.pocardalo@labodeshistoires.com), **Thibault Lacarrière**, Labo des Histoires (thibault@labodeshistoires.com)

2 European Commission. 2025. The European Ocean Pact. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic And Social Committee and the Committee Of the Regions. COM(2025) 281 final <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52025DC0281>

3 Council of the European Union: General Secretariat of the Council, Diversity and inclusion strategy 2030, Council of the European Union, 2025, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2860/0434927>

4 E.g. by adapting calls (focus, terms and conditions) for Young Ocean Advocates or organizing (more) practical hands-on (collective) activities benefiting from a wide range of skills.



How can EU4Ocean steer

#1 – Set-up an EU4Ocean **Inclusivity Working Group** that can facilitate experience sharing, learn from successes and failures and design recommendations

#2 – Develop and adopt an **ethical OL charter** that position inclusivity as core to our collective ambitions

And many more as practioners of inclusive OL or committed to inclusivity will think, suggest and demonstrate.

INSPIRING EXAMPLE 1: BRINGING NEURODIVERGENT CHILDREN TO THE ART EXHIBITION *BECOMING OCEAN*

In the follow-up to the United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC) 2025, TBA21, the Villa Arson museum and ACTeon, supported by Marie Philippon (intern specializing in accessibility to cultural heritage), **organised visits of the exhibition *Becoming Ocean* for neurodivergent children and people**. Preparatory activities to the visits included: developing guiding material for four artworks of the exhibition (as Easy-To-Read (ETR) and Augmented and Alternative Communication (AAC)); organising an adapted visit programme combining a range of interactive activities including a listening and sound workshop led by H el ene Blondel (a young artist from Villa Arson); exchanging with professionals specialized in caring for neurodivergent people. Two visits of the exhibition (around 30 visitors) were organized by Villa Arson mediators in July 2025. This experience helped realizing the societal roles the museum crew plays, with inclusivity gaining attention in the mandate of Villa Arson's mediators.

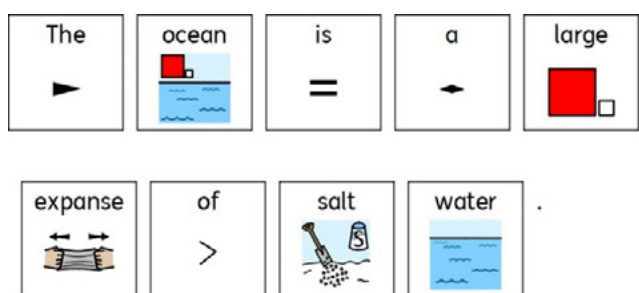


Figure 1. Presenting the ocean in Alternative Augmented Communication (source: TBA21)

INSPIRING EXAMPLE 2: AN INCLUSIVE APPROACH TO WRITING THE FUTURE OF THE OCEAN

Inclusion can go hand in hand with creative writing, as demonstrated by the winning project of the **MakeEuBlue Awards 2025, "Writing the Future of the Ocean"**, led by *Le Labo des histoires*. This project mobilized more than 400 young French people who rarely have a voice, half of them from disadvantaged communities (asylum seekers, illiterate and school dropouts, juvenile detention center inmates, blind young people with associated disorders...). They: (1) participated in **awareness-raising sessions** led by key scientists, experts, and stakeholders from the environmental and marine conservation communities; (2) developed **narratives** proposing solutions for protecting our ocean by 2050; (3) supported the GOBELINS Paris school in translating these narratives into **animated films**. These films were presented at events, in museums, and at various festivals, such as the National Maritime Museum, Sciences-sur-Mer, Pariscience and Atmosph eres...



#EU4Ocean
#Youth4Ocean
#EUBlueSchools

WHEN YOU GET INVOLVED

Enjoy the experience! Much energy and on-the-spot adaptations to accompany excitements and emotions of all types. For all involved, be it visitors, contributors, facilitators and mediators: enjoyable and emotionally touching; helps strengthening the feeling of “being useful”; feeling very proud! Great, let’s do it again; THE experience I will never forget...

Be prepared! Take time for sound preparation, including exchanges with professionals that already work with the targeted audience; set partnerships with specialized organisations and institutions; propose a diversity of activities to give comfort and ensure everyone finds what suits her/him; be ready to adapt to respond to emerging needs and unforeseen situations; debrief to learn and mainstream into your daily practice....

The ocean speaks all languages – the Ocean Literacy community strives to do the same!



#EU4Ocean
#Youth4Ocean
#EUBlueSchools

